

Dieterich Buxtehude: Trauermusik 'Mit Fried und Freud', for soprano, bass and strings, and 'Klaglied' for soprano and strings, 1674, BuxWV 76. Facsimile, score and parts. Edition Güntersberg G110.

The two short pieces based on the Lutheran choral 'Mit Fried und Freud' were written for the funeral of the scholar Menno Hanneken, pastor of the Marienkirche. Possibly originally an organ solo, a MS copy found in the Düben collection indicated accompaniment by 'viole'. This could either be viols or violin family instruments, or a mixture of the two (for example violin, two violas and bass viol). In two sections, each fourteen bars long, the Contrapunctus (soprano) is followed by Evolutio (bass).

The 'Klag-lied' in seven verses was added to the above work on the death of the composer's organist father, and is for soprano and the same strings (two tenor parts and a bass). The tenor parts have the unusual indication 'Tremolo', presumably for an extra lamenting affect (?with the bow). Verse six draws on musical heavenly images. Look no further for music suitable for a musician's funeral.

Judy Tarling

Er spielt nun die Freuden-Lieder
Auf des Himmels-Lust-Klavier,
Da die Engel hin und wieder
Singen ein mit süßer Zier.
Hier ist unser Leid-Gesänge
Schwarze Noten Traur-Gemenge
Mit viel Kreuzen durchgemischt,
Dort ist alles mit Lust erfrischt.

Schlafe wohl, du hochgeliebter,
Lebe wohl, du seelge Seel:
Ich, dein Sohn, nun hochbetrübt,
Schreib auf deines Grabes Kehl: *HSH*
'Allhie liegt, des Spielens Gaben
Selbsten Gott erfreuet haben:
Darumb ist sein Geist beglückt
Zu des Himmels Pfort gerückt.

Now he's playing songs of pleasure
On the keyboard of Heaven's joys.
Now and then the angels' descent
Joins with a delightful voice.
Here our chanting, full of sorrow,
Gloomy notes and angry mourning
Mingles with so many crosses,
There with joy all is refreshed.

So sleep well, beloved father,
And farewell, you soulful soul:
I, your son, now full of sadness,
Write on your memorial:
'Here lies one whose gifted playing
Once delighted the Almighty:
So his spirit full of joy
Has arrived at heaven's gate.